Children in Southwark

Newsletter of Southwark Children and Families Alliance No.8 - May 1999

Youth Offending Team set up

***Chris Domeney** spoke to the Southwark Children and Families Alliance meeting in May about the work of the new Southwark Youth Offending Team, which he manages.*

The Youth Offending Team (YOT) is an inter-agency team established by the local authority with responsibility for Social Services and Education in partnership with the Police, Probation Service and the Health Authority under the provisions of the 1998 Crime & Disorder Act. The Act is scheduled for full implementation in April 2000, but the Council and its partner agencies have decided to form the YOT earlier than required to enable the timely development of services.

The YOT is organised into two teams, team 'A' and team 'B', and is made up of police officers, social workers, youth workers, health workers, probation officers and education and welfare officers. The YOT Manager reports to a multi-agency Management Committee, chaired by the Director of Social Services, composed of senior managers from all the partner agencies.

Who we work with

We primarily work with young people aged 10-17 years who have been:

- cautioned by the police;
- charged with an offence and due to appear in the Youth Court;
- remanded by the court into local authority accommodation, or remanded on bail but require support/supervision;
- sentenced by the court to a period of supervision in the community;
- sentenced to a period of custody and throughcare when they are released into the community.

We provide a mixture of individual support and counselling, family work, and group work aimed at preventing young people from offending or re-offending.

We work in partnership with other agencies and the voluntary sector to address positively the risk factors associated with youth crime, such as family difficulties, truancy and school exclusion, unemployment and a lack of constructive leisure opportunities. The multi-agency nature of the team enables an integrated approach to tackle the problem of youth crime and its prevention.

During the coming year we will be working to develop services to meet the full range of orders required by the Crime and Disorder Act, including Reprimands and Final Warnings (which will replace Police Cautions), Reparation Orders, Child Safety Orders (for under 10s) and Parenting Orders.

The work of the YOT will be set out in the annual Youth Justice Plan required for submission to the National Youth Justice Board by December 1999. An interim 1999-2000 plan is available from the YOT offices.

Youth Offending Team, 90 Blakes Road, SE15 (tel. 0171 525 7911, fax. 0171 525 7925).

New funding for youth services

Southwark Youth Service has been allocated £200,000 to commission services for young people with the overall aim of diverting young people from crime.

Voluntary organisations registered with Southwark Youth Service are being invited to apply for funding of projects to meet the diverse needs of local young people (aged 11-25), particularly:

- projects that focus on young people at the highest risk of getting caught up in a cycle of anti-social behaviour;
- projects that target young offenders;
- projects encouraging volunteering and community action/involvement;
- school-linked initiatives (e.g. anti-bullying).

Application forms are available from Ms Kathy Walters, Administrative Officer, Southwark Youth Service, 15 Spa Road, SE16 3QW (tel. 0171 525 3388, fax 0171 525 3388). The closing date for applications is July 9 1999.

Funding news

Lottery winners

The National Lottery Charities Board have announced the successful applicants in the latest round of the Small Grants, Poverty & Disadvantage, and Community Involvement programmes. Congratulations to the following Southwark voluntary organisations working with children:

- Bricklayers Estate Tenants Association (£12,000) - to develop a children's playground section in a new recreation area;
- Dachwyng Parents Association Family Centre (£19,218 over three years) - to provide supplementary classes in national curriculum subjects.
- Grove Vale After School Club (£900) - for equipment.
- Independent Adoption Service (£8,676) - to raise awareness amongst ethnic minority parents about the possibilities of adopting or fostering children who are themselves from minority communities;
- Southwark and Camberwell Welcare (£222,696 over three years): Basic skills training to parents and after school care for children;
- Rockingham Estate Play Association (£124,332 over three years): volunteering opportunities for local people to work with young children, developing a range of play activities.

Application packs for the Community Involvement and Poverty & Disadvantage programmes are available from 0345 919191; for small grants the number is 0345 458458. Application forms are also available on the website www.nlcb.org.uk

New Opportunities Fund

The next deadline for the New Opportunities Fund Out of School Childcare programme is 15 June 1999. If an organisation submits an application by this date, they can expect to know the outcome by the end of October. The following deadline is 15 October, with organisations being informed whether or not they are successful by the end of February 2000. The final date for acceptance of application forms is not until 15 April 2003. Funding is available through Southwark Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership to help local organisations develop their proposals. For details contact David Wallis (0171 525 1504). If you need an application pack, call the New Opportunities Fund on 0845 6040555.

Bridge House Estates Trust

A key priority of this Corporation of London Trust Fund is work with children and young people. The three themes are:

- **Preventative work with children and young people (aged 5-16)**, particularly:

- work preventing homelessness or drug and alcohol misuse;
- advice, counselling and information services;
- life skills and personal development projects;
- work breaking cycles of violence, abuse, crime and mental illness.

- **Work promoting active involvement of young people (aged 11-18)**, including:

- developing personal and emotional skills, particularly in the areas of parenting, lifeskills and relationships;
- involving young people actively in their communities, including inter-generational work;
- enabling young people to realise their potential and to take responsibility

- **Young people in crisis (aged 16-21)**, including:

- tackling drug and alcohol problems and homelessness;
- supporting young parents, young carers or those with mental health problems;
- projects offering fresh opportunities to those who are living in poverty or deprivation.

The Trust does not usually fund under-5s work, play provision, playschemes or after-school care.

Application packs are available from Bridge House Estates Trust Fund, Corporation of London, PO Box 270, Guildhall, London EC2P 2EJ (tel. 0171 332 3710) or on the internet at www.bridgehousegrants.org.uk

Successful?

If you have made a successful grant application after hearing about a source of funding through Children in Southwark newsletter or a Southwark Children and Families Alliance meeting, please let us know.

Health Action Zone

Health needs and perceptions of young people

The results of a Lambeth, Southwark & Lewisham Health Action Zone study into the health needs and perceptions of young people have just been published. Carrick James Market Research were commissioned by Health First to investigate young people's views, experiences and attitudes in relation to health issues with a particular focus on GPs.

In depth discussions were held with 43 young men and women in Lambeth, aged 11-16, in a mixture of focus group, paired and individual interviews. The young people included school pupils, young offenders, children's home residents, youth club members and excluded pupils. Around two-thirds were from an African-Caribbean background.

"the pollution spreads and goes up your nose and makes it difficult to breathe"

Young people tended to conceive of health in terms of physical well-being. They generally had a good awareness of the health impact of smoking, drinking, drugs, diet and the environment and a clear understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. Nevertheless, as with adults, some felt unhealthy because of their failure to put this knowledge into practice.

"I can't run to the end of my road without getting tired, due to smoking"

The great majority of young people said that they would go to their GP/Doctor if they were concerned about their health (although most 11-13 year olds would first of all ask a parent). Two young offenders in the cohort said that they would not seek help from anybody unless they were injured: "Only if I was stabbed would I go to a doctor".

"As soon as you walk in, they shake your hand and say hello and ask what's happening"

Most young people had their 'own doctor' who they saw regularly, which they appreciated. They were generally positive about GPs and surgeries (although there was some criticism of 'unhelpful' receptionists), and found going to a GP a comfortable experience unless injections or embarrassing conditions were involved. They valued being treated with respect.

"I always had to go with my mum, because you have to be over 16 to go on your own"

All of the 16-year-olds made their own appointments, and went to the doctors unaccompanied. Most others tended to go to see the GP with their mothers. Many 14-15 year olds would prefer to go alone, but some had been misinformed by practice staff that they could not attend without a parent.

"I wouldn't trust them. They say it's confidential, but the next thing you know, they are discussing it in the staff room and every teacher knows about it... And they might bring Social Service into it"

Most young people did not know where to go for help with emotional problems such as stress. GPs were not seen as appropriate (perhaps because they were seen as being concerned with physical health), and teachers were not trusted.

"I kept saying, I'm not mad, why I am seeing you?"

The few who had accessed counselling services had mixed feelings, with some associating them with mental illness.

"it's all confidential, your parents don't have to know"

Most 14+girls mentioned Brook Advisory Centres as a safe place to access contraceptive advice and pregnancy testing. Some of the younger boys were also aware of Brook as a result of a visit to their school.

Although this study questioned a fairly small sample, it provides a useful summary of key issues for young people. Further details from Melanie Avis, Health First, 0171 955 4366.

Review of Children and Young People's Participation

Southwark Children and Families Alliance is helping to commission a HAZ-funded review of children's participation in Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham. An agency will be appointed to identify examples of involving young people across different agencies, looking at approaches ranging from consultation to direct involvement in the management of projects. If you are interested in receiving the tender documentation, please contact Neil Orr (0171 252 5859) by Monday 28 June.

We would also be very interested in hearing about any experiences local voluntary organisations may have had of involving children and young people in their work.

Schools Organisation Plan

Southwark Education is currently consulting on its Schools Organisation Plan. The Plan sets out the context in which the Local Education Authority plans for the addition or removal of school places. It includes information on pupil numbers and school places, and sets out the principles by which these should be configured to maximise educational achievement.

It is proposed that high performing and popular schools should be helped to expand, while schools unlikely to be removed from special measures or with excess surplus places could be closed or amalgamated.

The plan also covers special educational needs, gender balance, early years provision and community links. It is proposed that the potential of schools to act as a local community resource should be developed, with surplus capacity being utilised for facilities such as child care. This could provide opportunities for voluntary organisations to develop services on school premises.

The SOP does not include proposals for individual schools, but its approach is already informing decisions about local primary schools. At its May meeting, the Education and Leisure Committee decided to consult on proposals to close Grange Primary School, and to close both Grove Vale and Peckham Rye Primary Schools and reopen them as 'Fresh Start' schools with new staff, new heads and new governing bodies.

Copies of the Schools Organisation Plan are available from Southwark Education, 525 5001 or 525 5050. Responses should be returned by 27 July 1999.

Domestic Violence and Children

Domestic violence - usually violence directed against women by male partners- can have a serious impact on the children who witness it. In addition, there is a correlation between domestic violence and the direct abuse of children, physically, emotionally and sexually. In one recent study, there was evidence of domestic violence in two-thirds of child abuse cases (From periphery to centre: domestic violence in work with abused children - Marianne Hester and Chris Pearson, Policy Press, 1998).

In Southwark, direct work with children directly or indirectly affected by domestic violence is one of the areas which will be included in a bid for European DAPHNE funding (the EC's annual grant programme for measures combatting violence against women and children). A particular area of interest is the provision of positive role models to young men growing up in a violent environment.

Southwark Domestic Violence Forum are holding a major planning day on Monday June 28, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm at the United Reform Church Hall, Grove Lane, Camberwell. The event will include a workshop on children. All interested organisations are invited to attend.

To book your place at the Planning Day, or for further information on the Southwark Domestic Violence Forum, please contact Jane McTaggart (Community Safety, 525 7351). Margaret Haynes (Southwark Black Women's Centre, 0171 708 1643) is the Chair. Ceri Coddard (SAVO Women's Voluntary Action Coordinator, 0171 703 8733) is facilitating voluntary sector involvement.

Children & Families Alliance Meeting

2:00 pm - 4:30 pm,
Tuesday 6 July 1999

St Matthew's at the Elephant
Meadow Row
SE1 6RG

Ten years of the
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:
how can we make it a reality
for Southwark's children?

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NATIONAL LOTTERY CHARITIES BOARD

Children in Southwark

Newsletter of Southwark Children and Families Alliance No.9 - June 1999

Therapies for children with special needs

Local voluntary organisations have completed a survey of the availability of therapies for children with special needs in Southwark. Camberwell Advocacy Office, Contact a Family and the Mencap Family Adviser Service developed a questionnaire with Scope and sent it out to 215 families. The aim was to establish parents' experiences of, and attitudes to, therapies including speech and language therapy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy.

Speech and language therapy is the most commonly accessed form of therapy, and is highly valued by parents of children with communications difficulties. Of the 60 children whose parents completed questionnaires, 53 were currently receiving speech and language therapy, had done previously, or were on the waiting list for it (19 of these were also receiving one or more other therapies).

Waiting lists

A major concern was long waiting lists for treatment. Closely related to this is the issue of staff turnover. Parents were frustrated that after taking some time to nurture a relationship between the child and the therapist, the therapist might leave. Clearly it is understood that therapists will sometimes move jobs like anybody else, but delays in recruitment mean that it can be several months before staff are replaced.

There were particular issues for parents who access therapies through schools (32 of the 53 were accessing speech and language therapy in this way). Many parents were not sure what therapies their children were receiving at school or how often. This lack of involvement of parents makes it difficult for them to support the therapy at home. There were also concerns about therapy not being provided in school holidays.

The home learning service provided by Kids (funded by Southwark education) for the families of young children with special needs was highly regarded by parents.

The national picture

Nationally the provision of therapies for children is uneven and often inadequate to meet local needs. The Government recognised in its Green Paper on Special Educational Needs that the provision of speech and language therapy has been hindered by the conflicting duties and powers of health authorities and local education authorities and by lack of clarity over funding.

At present, health authorities are funded by the Government to purchase speech and language therapy even though it is often provided in school settings. Among the options being considered are giving the funding for speech and language therapies to local education authorities or giving health and education authorities joint responsibility.

- *For further information on the Southwark survey contact Wendy Lewington, Mencap Family Adviser Service, 0171 701 3400.*
- *For information about speech and language therapy in Southwark please contact: Bernadette Godwin, Manager, Speech and Language Therapy Services, Community Health South London, The Sheldon Child Development Centre, St Giles Rd, SE5 (0171 771 3431).*
- *The DFEE has set up a Working Group on Provision of Speech and Language Therapy Services to Children with Special Educational Needs (see documents on the internet at www.dfee.gov.uk/sen/therapy/index.htm).*

Young Carers

To mark National Carers Week in June, this issue of Children in Southwark is highlighting the needs of young carers.

A young carer is a child or young person who is looking after someone sick or disabled in their home. This may be a parent or other family member with a physical illness, disability, mental health problem or dependency on alcohol or drugs. After years of neglect, the needs of this group of young people are beginning to receive official recognition.

The government's National Strategy for Carers (1999) highlights some of the effects for children and young people of providing care, including:

- problems at school;
- isolation from other children;
- lack of time for play;
- lack of support and understanding.

The Strategy sets out a number of proposals, such as:

- encouraging schools to designate a link person for young carers;
- improving co-operation between adults' and children's social services (e.g. 'the community care assessment of a disabled parent must pay attention to that disabled person's role as a parent');
- ensuring 'that local authorities recognise... the need to sustain and enhance the number of young carers' projects'.

Young carers talking

A Pocketful of Daisies: voice of Southwark carers *is a new anthology of writing by local carers initiated by Councillor Janet Heatley during her recent period as Mayor of Southwark. The collection includes a number of contributions from young carers. Southwark Children and Families Alliance have some copies of a Pocketful of Daisies to distribute. They are free for carers, £2 for organisations.*

A life in the day of a young carer, aged 10

On Monday my Mum went into hospital I had to stay at a friends house for a while and I visited Mum on Friday and Saturday. I bought her some flowers and some chocolates. I had a lot dreams and woke up crying. I was okay when I saw her, I started to feel happy.

On the Saturday I didn't find Mum in bed, that's when I started to worry but one of the nurses came and said, "Are you looking for your Mum?" I didn't say anything. I was so upset when we found Mum we caught her smoking in the garden. When I was telling her off I sounded like the mother I was saying things like, "Get back to bed. Do you want to kill yourself smoking? Give me the cigarette or put it out."

In the morning I get up and if Mum's getting up I help her out of bed, if not I get ready for school and get her up when she's awake. When I arrive at school I'm fine until 11.00 am. Sometimes I'm okay and I just go to play but if not I go to my head teacher and ask if I can phone my mum. When I'm coming home I just come straight home unless my Mum asks me to go to the shop. When I get home I help do dinner if it needs doing and watch television, eat dinner, wash up, watch television some more and by 8.45 pm I get ready for bed, kiss mum goodnight and I'm in bed by 9.00 pm. I read a book for 15 minutes and then it's another day in the morning.

Making it easier for children to visit a mental hospital - by a young carer, aged 13

For children with parents who have a mental illness, really simple things can help improve their experience of visiting:

- I think that people should not smoke in the art area;
- Decorate all the walls. They are dirty;
- Make a room for children who are visiting their family;
- Buy new furniture - the old stuff is broken, holey or stinks;
- Clear up the mess that the patients make.

Young Carers Project

"Young carers need a break from all their hard work and that's what the Project's for" (carer aged 10)

Capital Carers Young Carers Project provides information and support for young carers up to the age of 18. Social and leisure activities to provide a break from caring include group activities, outings and holidays.

The Project has been highly praised in an independent evaluation recently carried out by the Young Carers Research Group at Loughborough University, which concluded: "This Project has in a short space of time established itself as a very successful service, highly valued by the young carers, their families and the professionals who refer to it".

User profile

The study found that 86% of the Project's carers and their families live on income support, and that there are significant levels of educational problems including bullying.

The Project has been particularly successful in engaging with young carers from black and minority ethnic communities compared with similar projects elsewhere, with 51% of young carers supported defining themselves as black.

92% of young carers in the survey were involved in domestic tasks. The situation of April, aged 10, is not untypical: "I hoover, and polish, wash up and do the cooking... I go shopping and when the lift is broken I still have to bring all the shopping up. I really don't like doing the cooking because I don't want to get burnt because I know I have to look after mum and if anything happens to me I'm going to feel upset because I don't really know who is going to look after mum".

Funding issues

Joint Finance funding of the Young Carers Project expires at the end of September 1999, and although 56% of the Project costs have been secured from charitable sources ongoing funding for its core development worker costs has not yet been identified. Given that 73% of the 81 young carers currently in the project were referred by statutory agencies (44% social services, 17% education, 12% health) it is hoped that local statutory agencies will help put the project on a secure and long term financial footing. The alternative, as the evaluation report makes clear, is that "a much needed and valuable resource for young carers...will disappear".

Contact: Cathy McNicholas, Young Carers Project, Capital Carers, St Paul's Church, Lorrimore Square, SE17 3QU (0171 793 0966).

Behaviour Support

Southwark Education's new Behaviour Support Plan is based on three core values:

- Everyone has the right to learn;
- Everyone has a right to feel safe;
- Everyone has a right to respect.

The three main elements of the strategy for maintaining a safe and calm atmosphere in schools (and outside) are:

- Teaching and learning for positive behaviour;
- Support for pupils at risk and students with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD);
- Involving parents and carers.

The plan highlights the contribution of local voluntary organisations in, for instance, helping schools develop mediation and peer counselling skills. It commits the local education authority to promoting "effective co-operation between voluntary agencies and schools".

There is also a commitment to ensuring "the participation of pupils and parents" in implementing the strategy and to addressing the over-representation of black pupils in exclusion figures and EBD provision.

The Behaviour Support Plan is available from Southwark Education Pupil Support and Special Educational Needs, 0171 525 2674.

Early Years and Childcare News

Free Places for Three Year Olds

From September 1999, 85% of three-year-olds in Southwark will be entitled to a free part time Nursery Education place. Children attending the following Southwark settings will be automatically entitled to a free place from the term after their third birthday:

- Early Years Centres;
- Voluntary managed playgroups and community nurseries;
- Facilities where parents are paying fees in a subsidised nursery whilst attending college or training (e.g. Southwark College).

In addition, free places will be available in private and other settings if the child has a social, emotional or developmental need or if the child's home language is not English. A seminar is being arranged to explain to providers how this will be administered (details from Bonnie Royal, 0171 525 5169).

Arts and Music

The next meeting of Southwark Early Years and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) will include a discussion of developing arts and music provision in childcare and out of school learning settings. All interested organisations are welcome to attend and participate from 10.00 am to 12.30 pm on Monday 19 July 1999 at the Education and Resource Centre, Cator St, SE15.

EYDCP Seminar: Making the most of the Childcare Tax Credit

Wednesday 14 July 1999, 10 am -12:30 pm
(registration and refreshments from 9:30 am)
Education & Resource Centre, Cator Street, SE15

The Childcare Tax Credit, part of the Working Families Tax Credit, comes into effect from October 1999. This seminar will explain what it will mean for parents and providers. With Anne Longfield (Kids Club Network), Harriet Harman MP (Chair, Southwark EYDCP) and a speaker from the Treasury.

Southwark Children and Families Alliance Launch

2.00 - 4:30 pm, Tuesday 6 July 1999
St Matthew's at the Elephant
Meadow Row, SE1 6RG

Ten years of the
UN Convention on the
Rights of the Child:
how can we make it a reality
for Southwark's children?

With:

- Anjana Bahl, Children's Rights Office
- Stephanie Elsy, Chair, Southwark Education & Leisure Committee
- John O'Hagan, Assistant Director (Children), Southwark Social Services;
- Sarah Hanchet, Chief Executive, North Southwark Primary Care Group;
- Harriet Harman, MP, Chair, Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

If you wish to attend and have not yet confirmed your attendance please call Neil Orr (0171 252 5859).

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NATIONAL LOTTERY CHARITIES BOARD

Children in Southwark

Newsletter of Southwark Children and Families Alliance No.10 - July/August 1999

Voluntary Sector Funding Strategy

Southwark Council are consulting on proposals to change they way they fund local voluntary organisations.

A key proposal is to abolish the annual open Grant Aid round in favour of a more strategic approach to funding services in different ways to meet the Council's objectives.

Instead of having to fill in grant application forms every year, more voluntary organisations will be able to negotiate longer term service level agreements or contracts. They will though be expected to demonstrate that they are providing quality, value for money services in line with local authority priorities.

It is likely that some grants funding will be maintained to support smaller community-based groups, and to fund one-off pieces of work.

Issues for organisations working with children will depend on which part of the council they are funded by. The Early Years and Childcare Sub-Committee (formerly Under-8s) has already signalled that it wants to make greater use of service level agreements, as well as reviewing funding levels in the light of the introduction of the Nursery Education Grant for 3 year olds (September 1999) and the Working Families Tax Credit (from October 1999). Most voluntary organisations directly funded by social services already have service level agreements, although these are being reviewed to ensure that they relate to current priorities.

Things to consider

- The Council's Strategic (Resources) Sub-Committee will decide on the funding system for 2000/01 in September, after which Social Services, Education & Leisure and the other committees will make their own arrangements to fit in with this. This means that funding decisions for 2000/01 may not be made until January or February next year (as opposed to before Christmas which would normally be the case). This may mean that your organisation has to issue workers temporary redundancy notices until you have received firm confirmation of funding.

- Make sure that you know where your organisation's work fits in with local priorities by reading plans such as the Early Years Development and Childcare Plan and the Children's Services Plan.

- The complexity of negotiating service level agreements and contracts should not be underestimated. If you have not done it before get advice on issues like incorporating your management committees, VAT and tax. The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership will be making business support available, and infrastructure organisations like Southwark Community Care Forum and SAVO may also be able to help.

- It is proposed that Council officers rather than Councillors will have more influence over funding decisions. Make sure that you build up a relationship with your monitoring officer, and that you complete monitoring information accurately and on time. Provide additional information on how your work makes a difference to the local community.

- Take some time out to ensure that your organisation is up to date with its policies and procedures.

Southwark Children and Families Alliance will be commenting on the specific issues for children's organisations arising from the proposed changes. We will be discussing this at the Alliance meeting on Wednesday September 15 1999 (see back page for details).

Children's rights in Southwark

50 people attended the official launch of Southwark Children and Families Alliance on 6 July. The event addressed the theme 'Ten years of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - how can we make it a reality for Southwark's children?'

Neil Orr set the scene by looking at the situation of Southwark children in relation to the Convention on the Rights of the Child ratified by the UN in 1989. In respect of Article 24, the right to good health and health care, local children are worse off than their peers elsewhere:

- Perinatal mortality (still birth or death of child within 7 days of birth) in Southwark is twice the national average;
- Child mortality (death of child aged 1-14) is 50% higher than the national average;
- There is a high incidence of asthma and respiratory problems;
- Dental health is poor: a third of 5 year olds have diseased teeth, which in turn indicates poor nutrition.

It is a similar picture when it comes to Article 27, the right to an adequate standard of living:

- 43% of Southwark children are brought up in low-earning households;
- 25% of children live in overcrowded accommodation;
- 3300 local private houses are unfit for human habitation.

Anjana Bahl from the national Children's Rights Office gave an overview of the UN Convention and examples of how it is being used in a practical way to inform the planning of services for children.

Councillor **Stephanie Elsy**, Chair of Southwark Education and Leisure Committee, discussed the local situation in relation to Article 28 - the right to education on the basis of equality of opportunity. Inequalities persist in the school system, with disparities in the quality of education, declining achievement for boys, and the over-representation of African-Caribbean boys in school exclusions.

Southwark are planning a conference on the education of African-Caribbean boys next term. Stephanie also highlighted the involvement of pupils in making radio adverts promoting school attendance.

John O'Hagan, Assistant Director (Children), Southwark Social Services, emphasised the link between Article 12 (the right to be listened to) and Article 19 (the right to be protected from abuse):: 'we can only protect children if we listen to what they say'. Local social services initiatives he mentioned included user feedback cards for children and the right of children over 12 to attend child protection conferences.

Harriet Harman MP, Chair of Southwark Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership stressed that childcare should 'not just be about a place for the child to be safe' but about providing positive opportunities for children to 'discover about themselves'.

She called for a 'cultural revolution to enable our children to have access to those things that children in private schools and areas outside of London have access to' and pledged that Southwark EYDCP would be supporting the expansion of out of school arts, music and drama activities.

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Editor: Neil Orr (Children & Families Policy Officer)

NATIONAL LOTTERY CHARITIES BOARD

Alliance Year One Report

It is now a year since Southwark Community Care Forum established Southwark Children and Families Alliance to bring together voluntary organisations working with children. In its first year of operation, the Alliance has established itself as a major force in the planning and development of children's services. We have recently submitted our monitoring report to our funders, the National Lottery Charities Board, setting out our achievements from September 1998 to August 1999:

● Southwark Children and Families Alliance has played a central role in the development of major new initiatives focusing on children locally, including the Health Action Zone, Sure Start and the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

● Our membership database now includes 230 voluntary organisations working with children locally. These include playgroups, community nurseries, after school clubs, supplementary schools, youth clubs, family support agencies, advocacy projects and organisations working with children with disabilities. It also includes a range of organisations working with children and families from Southwark's many ethnic minority communities.

● All organisations on our database receive a monthly mailing, including Children in Southwark newsletter. The newsletter is also sent to key statutory officers and has quickly become a reference point for all those interested in children's services locally. It regularly features information on funding opportunities, service developments and policy issues.

● The Alliance has held nine events (meetings, specialist training and an official launch). These have had a combined attendance of 148, with 70 local voluntary organisations taking part. Meetings have included updates on the range of local developments impacting on children including Quality Protects, Education Action Zone, Health Action Zone, Sure Start, Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and the Youth Offending Team. Voluntary organisations have also had the opportunity to share experience and to put their views directly to senior officers in health, education and social services.

● The Alliance has worked closely with the Southwark Community Care Forum Training and Technical Support Project to make its training programme more accessible to children's organisations (previously aimed more at adult community care organisations). Between October 1998 and July 1999, 109 places were taken by children's organisations on 19 courses covering such topics as fundraising (including a course specifically for children's organisations), employment law, food hygiene and first aid. A joint Alliance/SCCF training needs questionnaire has identified more specialist needs for children's organisations which will be addressed in future training programmes.

● The Children and Families Policy Officer has provided one to one information, advice and support to 50 local voluntary organisations.

● Children's voluntary sector representatives are now represented on all key planning groups. The Alliance organised elections for places on the Children's Joint Strategy and Commissioning Group and for the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). In addition the Alliance's Children and Families Policy Officer has been recognised as a full member of both bodies, and elected as the Vice Chair of the EYDCP.

● The Children and Families Policy Officer has coordinated voluntary sector policy papers on key local issues, such as parenting and respite care for children with disabilities. Our policy work has undoubtedly had an impact on decisions taken and resources allocated. There are a number of projects working with children locally which would probably not have been funded without the support of the Alliance.

● Information about local voluntary organisations working with children has been supplied to officers in education, health, social services and planning and regeneration. This has included tailored lists of organisations working with children in a particular geographical area or with particular needs.

● Further key tasks for next 12 months will include:

- Actively promoting children's participation in the planning, development and delivery of services.
- Promoting the children's voluntary sector to statutory agencies, including the new Primary Care Groups.
- Continuing to develop training in partnership with other training providers, including a specialised children's programme based on our training needs questionnaire.

Early Years/Childcare

The next meeting of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership will take place on Monday 20 September 1999, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm at the Education and Resource Centre, Cator St, SE15. All those with an interest in childcare are welcome to attend partnership meetings, including parents. If you need a crèche for the meeting, please contact Bonnie Royal, 0171 525 5169.

Business start up

The Play Training Project is a voluntary organisation based in Camberwell which aims to promote the quality of childcare by providing appropriate training to local residents and employers.

A 'Business start up' course will be starting in September, and repeated again in January and April next year. The aim is to provide those wishing to start up or expand childcare provision (early years or after school) with the skills for success and sustainability. The course forms part of the support offered by PTP in partnership with the Daycare Trust to develop the capacity of new and existing childcare providers, with funding from the EYDCP. For further details contact Deborah Pitt, 0171 703 4163.

Children & Families Alliance Meeting

2:00 pm – 4:30 pm,
Wednesday 15 Sept. 1999
Clubland, 54 Camberwell Rd, SE5

Southwark Council
voluntary sector strategy

The council will be deciding on its funding process on Sept. 6th; come and hear the outcome and discuss what it means for organisations working with children.

Meet the Funders

Southwark Community Care Forum have arranged a series of seminars to give voluntary organisations an opportunity to meet with major funders and find out more about their priorities and procedures:

- **Lloyds TSB Foundation**, Tuesday 14 September 1999, 10.00 am - 12.30 pm, Peckham Pulse, 10 Melon Road, SE15.

The Foundation's objectives are to meet social and community needs and to promote education and training. Its special interest areas include family support and crime prevention.

- **BBC Children in Need** and **Health Action Zone Community Chest**, Thursday 21 October 1999, 11.00 am - 3:00 pm (lunch included) at Cambridge House, 131 Camberwell Road, SE5.

BBC Children in Need fund projects working with children disadvantaged because of mental, physical or sensory disabilities; behavioural or psychological problems; living in poverty or situations of deprivation; illness, distress, abuse or neglect.

The HAZ Community Chest will be funding a range of projects across Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham in line with the HAZ Children First priorities.

- **Comic Relief**, Tuesday 1st November 1999, 10.00 am - 12.00 pm at Peckham Pulse, 10 Melon Road, SE15

Comic Relief's Young People's Grant Programme priorities include young people abused through prostitution; involved with the criminal justice system; affected by drugs and alcohol; and work which is run by young people themselves. Other Grant Programmes includes Domestic Violence and Refugees.

*Places are limited on these seminars, so if you wish to attend you **must** book in advance by calling Julie Lomax or Wendy Maguire on 0171 252 5291.*

Children in Southwark

Newsletter of Southwark Children and Families Alliance No.11 - September 1999

Accidents and children

Accidental injury heads the league table of causes of death among children and young people, and puts more children in hospital than any other cause.

Amongst children under 5, about half of all deaths occur as a result of accidents in the home. Serious accidents to children can by caused by fires, burns, falls, drowning, choking, poisoning and cuts from sharp objects.

Each year in England, nearly 180 children die and almost 4,800 are injured as pedestrians or cyclists (one of the worst records in Europe); another 215 children are killed and 2,690 seriously injured as car passengers.

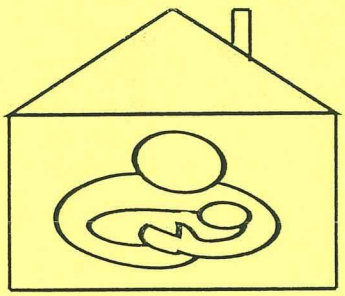
Although the word 'accident' implies an unforeseen chance event, research shows that some groups and individuals are more likely to experience an accident than others. Accidents are more prevalent in conditions of poverty, overcrowding, social stress and a generally impoverished physical environment. For instance, the children of unskilled workers are five times more likely to be killed as pedestrians than those with parents in professions.

Preventing accidents

The government's public health white paper, Saving Lives: Our Healthier Nation (1999) identified reducing accidents as one of its four priority areas. A target has been set to reduce the death rate by at least a fifth and serious injury by at least a tenth by 2010.

Locally, the Lambeth, Southwark & Lewisham Health Action Zone has set a target of reducing home accidents by 20% between 1998 -2008. Housing design is a factor in more than half of accidents in the home, and to address this HAZ has funded a housing design pilot project in Southwark building on work undertaken by the Peckham Partnership. The project will be producing guidelines on home safety to inform the building of new homes and the renovation of older ones.

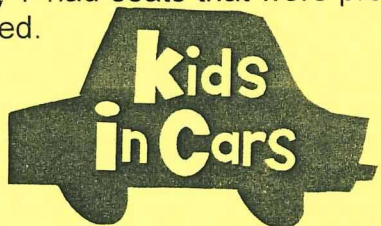
Shaftesbury Child Safety Scheme



Many accidents in the home can by prevented by taking simple precautions. The Shaftesbury Resource Centre in Camberwell has launched a child safety scheme for families on low income with children aged 4 and under. For just £10 they can supply and fit up to £60 worth of safety equipment, including fireguards, stairgates and cupboard catches. For a small fee, voluntary organisations can become a referral agency to Shaftesbury who also provide a furniture scheme and other services. Alternatively, referrals can be made via a health visitor. For further details call Leticia or Chris, 0171 737 7475.

Kids in Cars

For children in cars a properly fitted safety seat is the most important form of protection. Yet a survey in Surrey Quays found that only 50% of young children in cars were using a baby seat. Furthermore, out of 140 Southwark drivers who had fitted a child safety seat, only 7 had seats that were properly and safely fitted.



Continued on page two

Accidents and children (continued)

Southwark Council's Public Protection Services have trained staff at 3 local garages to carry out free child-seat safety checks, and have also produced a leaflet for parents 'Is your child's car seat safe?' For a copy or for further information, call 0171 525 5777.

Southwark Health Alliance

Southwark Health Alliance is a forum bringing together Southwark Council, health, the voluntary sector and other agencies to plan for a healthy and safe environment in Southwark.

Southwark Health Alliance's Accident Prevention and Public Safety group has recently been looking at tackling a number of issues, including the high numbers of children injured falling from windows.

For further information about Southwark Health Alliance, call Jane Miller, 0171 716 7027. Jane would be interested in hearing about any local accident prevention issues or initiatives.

Further accident prevention measures, including safer routes to schools and traffic calming, are set out in Southwark Council's Health Strategy, developed by the Council in conjunction with Southwark Health Alliance (available from Jin Keat Lim, 0171 525 3849).

Early Years and Childcare News

Partnership Meetings

Tessa Jowell MP attended the September meeting of the Southwark Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. As well as being a local MP she is, as a minister for health, a driving force behind the government's Sure Start programme. Tessa spoke to the Partnership about Sure Start which she presented as being a key plank in a ten year drive against child poverty. Afterwards she visited the Sure Start Southwark area on the Aylesbury Estate along with Harriet Harman MP, Chair of the Partnership.

The Partnership has awarded a major contract to support the development of childcare locally to Kidsclub Network and the Daycare Trust (with the Play Training Project and the SE1 Childcare Consortium). Childcare providers will be able to access training and one-to-one support on business planning and other development issues, and new networks of providers will be established. There will also be a focus on informing parents and on encouraging the uptake of childcare from communities who appear to be underusing it at present. For further information, contact Sarah Willis (0171 525 5240).

The next Southwark Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership meeting will take place on Monday October 18th 1999, from 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm at the Education and Resource Centre, Cator St, SE15. The main focus of the meeting will be on issues of quality, recruitment and training. All voluntary organisations, or others with an interest in childcare, are welcome to attend.

Sure Start Southwark Aylesbury Plus

The Delivery Plan for Sure Start Southwark Aylesbury Plus has been submitted to the national Sure Start Unit for approval. The programme aims to bring about a sustainable improvement in the health, learning skills and life chances for young children living on the Aylesbury Estate and surrounding area. The Plan sets out proposals for a range of service developments including:

- home visits for all families with young children;
- antenatal screening to identify those in need of extra support;
- preventative child mental health services;
- improved services for children with speech/language delay;
- new special needs workers in pre-schools;
- respite care packages for children with special needs.
- 60 additional pre-school childcare places;
- new play areas and more play learning activities;
- a programme to engage fathers in caring for their children;
- enhanced sexual health services for young parents.

The Sure Start Southwark Partnership has been led by Community Health South London NHS Trust and National NEWPIN. Southwark Children and Families Alliance is also a partner, along with 12 other local voluntary organisations. The whole programme is costed at £1.23 million a year, although the national Sure Start Unit may scale this down somewhat.

Funding news

Right Fit

Right Fit is a partnership between Glaxo Wellcome and Barnardo's aiming to improve the health of children and young people. The emphasis is on putting young people at the centre of the initiative so that they can make balanced decisions about their health and lifestyle, rather than making them just an audience for receiving information. £3 million is available over 3 years for projects to help children and young people, and those who work with them, develop and run projects tackling the key areas of healthy eating, physical activity and smoking.

For an application pack phone 0800 358 8866. The closing date for applications is 29 October 1999.

Lloyds TSB

Southwark Community Care Forum held a Meet the Funders seminar with John Aldridge of Lloyds TSB Foundation on 14 September. The event was attended by 25 local voluntary organisations, many of them working with children.

Lloyds TSB mainly makes one off grants of between £300 and £10,000. Current priorities include:

- crime prevention activities involving young people;
- family support;
- after school clubs, family centres, youth clubs and playschemes;
- pre-school education.

Funding guidelines and an application form are available from Lloyds TSB Foundation, PO Box 140, St Mary's Court, 20 St Mary Hill, London EC3R 8NA (tel. 0171 204 5276).

Youth Service Directory

Southwark Youth Service have produced a directory of provision for young people. The directory includes details of youth services, after school clubs, play facilities, arts projects and a range of other services. It is available from Southwark Youth Office, 15 Spa Road, London SE16 3QW (0171 525 3933).

Forthcoming Events

Southwark Children's Foundation 21st Celebrations

Since it was established in 1978, Southwark Children's Foundation has opened up a range of opportunities for local children. Current activities include organising artist residences in local primary schools, providing transport to arts and music events and other places of educational interest, and arranging holidays. The Foundation also provides free tuition for children to learn brass band instruments with a Saturday Primary Brass Band based at Eveline Lowe Primary School.

To mark its 21st anniversary the Foundation is holding a celebration concert at 7.30 pm on Thursday 21st October 1999, at Southwark Cathedral. The concert will feature the London Welsh Male Voice Choir and the SCF School Brass Band. Tickets are available from: SCF, the School House, Heber School, Heber Road, SE22 9LA (0181 6893 8999) - £10 for adults, £5 for children, £25 for a family of 4.

Southwark Pre-School Learning Alliance AGM

The annual general meeting of Southwark Pre-School Learning Alliance takes place on Thursday 14 October 1999, 9.45 am at Sojourner Truth Community Centre, 161 Sumner Road, SE15 6JL. The guest speaker is Linda Cleverly from Contact a Family. Details from Emma Marks (0171 252 7929).

Black History Month

Black History Month (October 1999) in Southwark will include a number events for children and young people including art, drama, dance, cooking and storytelling activities. For a full programme call the Equalities Unit, 0171 525 7427.

Drugs training

The Community Drug Education Project offers low cost training (maximum £10 a day) on drugs to workers in Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham. Forthcoming courses include drug awareness, talking to young people about drugs and women and drugs/families and drugs. For a course brochure call 0181 691 0550 or e-mail training@cdep.demon.co.uk

Children and Families Alliance News

September Alliance Meeting

The Alliance meeting on 15 September was attended by 20 people. Mike Cantor of the Council's Grants & Community Safety Unit explained the proposed changes to voluntary sector funding, in particular the move away from an annual grants round to a greater use of service agreements and contracts (see last issue for details). Neil Orr has prepared a response on the likely impact on children's organisations, including those funded by education, early years and social services. This will be submitted to the Council's Strategic Resources Sub-Committee as part of a more general response from Southwark Action for Voluntary Organisations (SAVO). The Sub-Committee meets on October 11th to decide on the Council's future voluntary sector strategy.

Sarah Hanchet, Chief Executive, North Southwark Primary Care Group talked about the PCG's plans for children's health. The main focus in the next year will be on increasing the immunisation rate for children, which is low locally. In the longer term, the PCGs will take over much of the Health Authority's Commissioning role, but PCG funding of the voluntary sector is likely to be some way off. In the mean time the Alliance (with Southwark Community Care Forum) will be looking at how to improve service and policy links between the PCGs and voluntary organisations.

The next Alliance meeting has been set for ***10.00 am - 12.30 pm***
Tuesday 23 November 1999
(venue to be confirmed).

New Website

Our new website is now online. It includes:

- information about the Alliance and its work;
- an outline of the role of the voluntary sector in working with children;
- a summary of data about Southwark children;
- a list of telephone helplines for children and their families;
- links to 40 related websites.

Check it out at:
www.southwark-children.freeserve.co.uk

Advisory Group

Southwark Children and Families Alliance is establishing an advisory group of local voluntary organisations working with children. The role of the group will be to:

- ensure that the Alliance meets the diverse needs of the children's voluntary sector;
- act as a forum for monitoring the Alliance's progress;
- assist in identifying priorities for the Alliance;
- assist in developing policy.

The Advisory Group will meet a maximum of four times a year for two hours. In between meetings the Children and Families Policy Officer will maintain regular contact with Advisory Group members to keep them abreast of developments.

The Alliance will benefit from being able to make better use of the knowledge and expertise of the range of organisations working with children and families locally.

Advisory Group members will benefit from having a more direct input into the strategic planning of children's services in Southwark, and gaining an understanding of broader policy issues.

If you might be interested in joining the Advisory Group, please contact Neil Orr (details below).

E-mail: *in addition to our monthly newsletter we are now sending out weekly information by e-mail. If you have an e-mail address let us know.*

Children in Southwark

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1 Grosvenor Terrace, SE5 0NR

Tel. 0171 252 5859; Fax. 0171 703 7661
e-mail: neil@southwark-children.freeserve.co.uk

Children & Families Policy Officer: Neil Orr

Bringing together voluntary organisations to promote the rights and interests of children in Southwark

Children in Southwark

Newsletter of Southwark Children and Families Alliance/SCCF No.12 - October 1999

Children's Partnership Board

The new Southwark Children's Partnership Board met for the first time on October 5th. The Board takes over the responsibility for the joint planning of children's services from the previous Children's Joint Strategy and Commissioning Group, but the shift is intended to amount to significantly more than a change of name.

The wider picture is that the main planning body for the health and well-being of children and adults is now the Southwark Partnership Board, which will replace the old Joint Consultative Committee. This Board includes the Chair of the Social Services and Health Committee (a councillor), Primary Care Group Chairs, Non Executive Members of the Health Board, as well as senior officers from different agencies including Southwark Community Care Forum (SCCF).

The Children's Partnership Board is one of several 'sub-boards' reporting to the Southwark Partnership Board (others include Community Care, Learning Difficulties and Mental Health Partnership Boards).

Membership

The membership of the Children's Partnership Board includes officers from:

- Southwark Council Social Services, Education and Leisure services;
- Lambeth, Southwark & Lewisham Health Authority;
- Inner London Probation Service;
- South London and Maudsley NHS Trust;
- Community Health South London NHS Trust;
- Kings Health Care NHS Trust;
- Guys and St Thomas' NHS Trust;
- Southwark Police;
- Health Action Zone;
- Southwark Children and Families Alliance;
- Cultural Unity Working Group.

Terms of reference

The terms of reference of the Children's Partnership Board have been agreed as follows:

- Setting strategic direction in areas of mutual concern and where there are service or policy overlaps (including agreeing shared priorities for action and implementation);
- Managing and reviewing performance in relation to joint activities and initiatives;
- Financial responsibilities for joint activities (including maintaining an overview of all financial resources invested in services for children);
- Community responsibilities for children (including optimising quality of opportunities for children, and promoting user participation).

Partnership working

A Southwark Community Care Forum survey found a common perception amongst voluntary organisations that few major decisions were taken in the old joint planning structure. The Partnership Board structure is designed to have the authority to commit significant resources on behalf of the major local agencies.

The government's avowed partnership agenda, as set out in the Health Act 1999 and accompanying guidance, is to not to create a new bureaucratic structure but to make a real difference to the quality of life of communities through closer working between local authorities, health authorities and other agencies. Local partnerships are being encouraged to look at new ways of breaking down divisions to create co-ordinated user-focused services.

The guidance gives as an example the lead commissioning of services for children with severe disabilities requiring specialist health care, education and social care. With lead commissioning, one agency is responsible for putting together assessments of need and putting together a package of support on behalf of all the agencies involved, rather than health, education and social services all making their own arrangements.

Continued on page two

Children's Partnership Board (continued)

The voluntary sector

The voluntary sector has lost some representation in the new structure. For instance, both the JSCG and the JCC had elected voluntary sector representatives in addition to the voluntary sector infra-structure place (SCFA/SCCF) but this is not the case with the Partnership Boards.

There will though be other opportunities for voluntary organisations to feed into the new structure. Southwark Community Care Forum is undertaking a review of how this can best be achieved, as well as looking at how users and carers can be involved. As part of SCCF, Southwark Children and Families Alliance will have an input into this review.

First meeting

The main business of the first meeting was to agree the terms of reference for the Board, and its focus.

There was a discussion about joint finance, with funding of six children's projects due to expire in the next year. It was agreed that reports on these would be brought to the next meeting on 30th November for possible decisions on funding pick up. I pointed out that the importance of some of these projects is out of proportion to the level of funding, with some key service gaps (such as respite care) being partially if inadequately filled by joint finance and similar time limited projects.

Neil Orr, Southwark Children and Families Alliance/SCCF, voluntary sector representative to Children's Partnership Board.

Early Years and Childcare News

New Opportunities Fund

The first successful bids for the New Opportunities Fund Childcare Programme have been announced. In Southwark, at least 892 new childcare places will be created with grants totalling £267,000.

The largest grant (£161,900) is for a Consortium led by Southwark Council. This will help create after school places at Kintore Way and Nell Gwynn nurseries (32 places for 3 to 5 year olds) and 4 new after school clubs in primary schools (200 places for 5 to 11 year olds). It will also fund the Cherry Gardens Holiday Playscheme for children with disabilities and complex special needs aged 3 to 5, similar to that provided by Only Connect last summer.

Southwark voluntary organisations successful in the first round include Bosco Centre (£17,042), Lighthouse Supplementary School (£38,238), East Dulwich Community Project/Little Angels (£17,256) and the Plough Redemption Foundation Trust (£32,700).

North Southwark Education Action Zone is to receive a £398,444 grant under the NOF Out of School Learning Programme. The aim is to offer local pupils a wide and stimulating range of after school activities including drama, music, sport, arts and crafts, IT skills, gardening, languages and study support. Partners in the bid include The Globe theatre, The Tate Gallery of Modern Art and South Bank University.

Southwark Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership have contracted with the Daycare Trust and the Play Training Project to support organisations developing new childcare places. If you want help with completing your NOF Childcare Application Form please contact Sara Willis (525 5240).

A Play Association for Southwark?

A meeting convened by Playlink has agreed to explore the development of a Southwark Play Association. Similar Associations in other London boroughs have played an important role in supporting the work of adventure playgrounds, after school clubs and other voluntary sector providers of play for school age children.

At the meeting on October 20th, representatives from the Play Training Project, Camberwell After School Project, Rockingham Estate Play Association, The Leisure Centre, Only Connect and Southwark Children and Families Alliance agreed in principle to support establishing a Southwark Play Association. A further meeting has been arranged to consider more fully the options for doing so. We would encourage voluntary sector play providers to attend.

Next meeting: 10:30 am, Thursday 18 November 1999, Rockingham Estate Play Association, 10 Dickens Square, SE1. Further information from Dave Wainwright, Playlink, 0171 820 3800.

£ Funding news £

BBC Children in Need

Southwark Community Care Forum held a successful Meet the Funders seminar on 21st October with Allan Watson, National Co-ordinator, BBC Children in Need. Last year (1998/99), Children in Need made 2200 grants worth £20 million. 75% of grants were for less than £5000, although grants of up to £25,000 (and exceptionally more) may be made for up to three years. Children in Need funds work which makes a positive difference to the lives of children disadvantaged by:

- Any kind of disability;
- Behavioural or psychological problems;
- Living in poverty or situations of deprivation;
- Illness, distress, abuse or neglect.

There are two closing dates: 30th November 1999 (with funding if successful from the end of April 2000) and 30th March 2000 (funding from August 2000). If you are seeking funding for any activities in summer 2000 you must apply by the November deadline. For an application pack phone 020 8576 7788.

Health Action Zone

The Meet the Funders seminar also featured Mubin Haq, the Grants Officer for the HAZ Community Chest. £500,000 a year will be available for a mixture of small grants (up to £5000) and large grants (up to £35,000). Criteria have yet to be finalised but it is likely that priority will be given to projects that relate to children and young people (aged up to 25), and to intergenerational and family based activities. Application packs will be available in December, and you can register an interest now to ensure that you receive one as soon as they are ready.

Contact: Mubin Haq, HAZ Grants Officer, South East London Community Foundation, Room 6, Winchester House, 11 Cranmer Road, SW9 6EJ (0171 582 5117).

Southwark Council: no more grants rounds

Southwark Council's Strategic Resources Sub-Committee agreed to scrap the annual voluntary sector grants round at its meeting on October 11th. This does not mean that grants funding has been abolished - different council departments may choose to advertise for applications for grants to meet particular needs. There is likely though be a greater use of service agreements and contracts. Education and Leisure are planning to put all organisations funded for more than £18,000 on service agreements; Social Services has been doing something similar for several years.

All organisations currently funded should receive a letter shortly setting out the procedure for 2000/2001. Most organisations are likely to have their funding renewed pending decisions on future priorities. There will probably not be an opportunity at this stage for currently unfunded organisations to apply for funding, but this will change as new arrangements fall into place.

Events

One Parent Families

The National Council for One Parent Families is offering free training courses for organisations providing advice and information to lone parents in Southwark and Lambeth. The course will be based around their comprehensive One Parent Families Information Manual, a free copy of which will be given to all participants (normal cost £85). The courses will take place on Thursday 9th December 1999 and Tuesday 25th January 2000. Further details from Frances Hampton, National Council for One Parent Families, 255 Kentish Town Road, NW5 2LX (0171 428 5400/5402, fax. 0171 482 4851).

Supplementary Schools Forum

The first meeting of Southwark's new Supplementary Schools Forum takes place on 10th November, 6.30 - 8.30 at Southwark Council for Community Relations, 36a Rye Lane, Peckham, SE15 5BS. For further information please contact Lucy Hall, Supplementary Schools Co-ordinator, SCCR (0171 252 8082).

SAVO Women's Conference 1999

Southwark Action for Voluntary Organisations are holding a Building the Women's Sector conference on Monday 15 November 1999, 10-4, Peckham Settlement, Goldsmiths Road, SE5. The conference will look at the opportunities and threats for women's groups in Southwark. Details: Ceri Goddard, 0171 703 8733.

Government Objectives for Children's Social Services

The Government has issued a new framework of objectives for children's social services. These include:

- ensuring stable, secure, safe and effective care for all children;
- protecting children from abuse and neglect;
- better life chances for children in need: good education, health and social care for all children;
- good life chances for children in care: good education, health care and social care;
- enabling young people leaving care to live successful adult lives;
- meeting the needs of disabled children and their families;
- better assessment leading to better services;
- actively involving users and carers;
- using regulation to protect children;
- making sure that child care workers are fit for the job;
- making better use of resources: choice, effectiveness and value for money.

For each of the above there are a series of more detailed sub-objectives. For instance for disabled children these include:

- making sure that local authorities and the health services have a complete picture of the numbers and circumstances of disabled children living in their area;
- providing more and better family support to help disabled children and their families live ordinary lives;
- helping more disabled and non-disabled children use the same play and leisure services;
- giving children and parents information about the services which might help them.

A summary of the document is available on the internet at www.doh.gov.uk/scg/objcss.htm

Quality Protects in Southwark

Like all local authorities, Southwark will be expected to detail how they are going to meet these objectives in their second Quality Protects Management Action Plan for 2000/2001. Funding will be allocated on the basis of this Plan. Southwark Social Services are still finalising the commissioning of projects from this year's Quality Protects Special Grant (1999/2000). A number of projects are to be commissioned from the voluntary sector, including Capital Carers children and families respite service.

Children & Families Alliance Meeting

10:00 am – 12:30 pm,
Tuesday 23rd November 1999

Walworth Rd. Methodist Church, 54 Camberwell Rd, SE5

Children's Social Services in Southwark: Quality Protects

How can the voluntary sector help to meet the government's objectives for children's social services? What should Southwark Social Services be seeking funding for in their Quality Protects Management Action Plan? Come and discuss these and related issues with Andrew Downing, Southwark Social Services' lead officer for Quality Protects.

Children's Participation Review

On behalf of LSL Health Action Zone, Southwark Children and Families Alliance/SCCF has commissioned Barnardo's to undertake a review of children's participation across Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham. The review will be looking for local examples of good practice covering different levels of participation, including consultation, direct involvement in service planning, project management and service provision. If you think your project should be included, please contact Neil Orr at SCFA (contact details below).

Children in Southwark

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Children & Families Policy Officer: Neil Orr

Bringing together voluntary organisations to promote the rights and interests of children in Southwark

NATIONAL LOTTERY CHARITIES BOARD

Children in Southwark

Newsletter of Southwark Children and Families Alliance/SCCF No.13 - November 1999

Children First - Health Action Zone Update

Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham (LSL) was one of the first 11 areas in the country to gain Health Action Zone (HAZ) status in April 1998. HAZs are about reducing health inequalities, improving health and improving the way agencies work together. The main focus of the LSL HAZ is on working to improve health and opportunities for children and young people in South East London.

Partners in the HAZ include all three local authorities, LSL Health Authority, the local Health Trusts and Primary Care Groups, the voluntary sector, including Southwark Children and Families Alliance/SCCF and local users themselves. The HAZ is intended to run for at least seven years, with funding at present of about £5.4 million a year to fund a range of initiatives across nine Programmes.

Local Targets

The local Health Action Zone has set itself some ambitious targets, including:

- reducing home accidents;
- reducing the number of low birthweight babies;
- reducing the number of children going to school without breakfast;
- increasing access to mainstream leisure provision for disabled children;
- reducing numbers of children received into care where parents have learning disabilities or mental health problems;
- reducing school exclusions;
- reducing numbers of teenage conceptions;
- reducing re-offending by young people;
- reducing usage of illegal drugs amongst under 25s;
- reducing smoking amongst young people and other target groups;
- increasing job opportunities and supporting employment for disabled young people, those with mental health problems and care leavers.

Multi-agency Programme groups are responsible for identifying ways of meeting these targets, including funding projects to try out innovative new approaches. The 9 Programme groups are: Developing Healthier Communities; Parenting Support; Disabled Children and Young People with Special Needs; Working with Excluded Children; Unwanted Teenage Pregnancy; Youth Crime; Substance Misuse; Employment Opportunities; and Smoking Cessation.

Commissioning and Funding

HAZ has now established a clear funding process. The Programme groups draft commissioning papers and bidding packs, which set out the kind of projects that will meet gaps in current services or knowledge. Interested organisations are invited to complete a standard form setting out how they would undertake this work and at what cost. Decisions on which projects to fund are taken by an Appraisal Panel on the basis of common criteria, including contribution to HAZ targets, cultural sensitivity, social inclusion and value for money.

Several Southwark voluntary organisations have already had funding agreed, including NEWPIN and Homestart (through the Parenting Programme), Charterhouse (through the Excluded Children Programme) and Camberwell Advocacy Office/Cambridge House (through the Disabled Children Programme). Only Connect received HAZ underspend funding to provide the much-needed Cherry Gardens Under-5s Summer Respite Scheme for children with disabilities.

A number of health projects working with Southwark children have also been funded by HAZ, including locality-based child mental health services (developed by South London & Maudsley NHS Trust) and an early intervention project for infants at risk of developing language and literacy delay (Community Health South London NHS Trust).

Further commissioning papers and bidding packs will be available shortly. The Developing Healthier Communities pack will be available from 17 November (with forms returned by 15 December).

continued page two

Health Action Zone (continued)

For Substance Misuse, Sexual Health, and Smoking packs will be available from 23 November (return 7th January). If you would like to receive one or more of these papers please contact Liz James, HAZ Administrator (0171 716 7000, ext. 7513, e-mail: haz.enq@ob.lslha.sthames.nhs.uk).

In addition to the main Programmes, £500,000 a year will be available through the HAZ Healthy Communities Fund (formerly known as the Community Chest) for both small and larger grants to help improve the health and well-being of children and young people in local communities. Application packs for this fund will be available in December from South East London Community Foundation, who administer the Fund on behalf of HAZ. Contact Mubin Haq, HAZ Grants Officer at SELCF on 0171 582 5117.

What can you do for HAZ?

The Health Action Zone is about much more than the projects it will be funding. It is about creating 'whole systems change' to improve the situation for local children and young people. Voluntary organisations, like everybody else, need to consider how we might need to change the ways we work in order to meet some of our targets for children. For instance, are there ways in which we could better integrate services provided to the same families by health, social services, education and the voluntary sector? Are there opportunities for different voluntary organisations to work in closer partnership? Are we doing enough to listen to the voices of children, young people and their parents/carers, rather than just asserting that the voluntary sector knows best because we are 'closer to the ground'?

Issues for the HAZ Partnership Board

The Health Action Zone is managed at a strategic level by the HAZ Partnership Board, currently chaired by Chris Bull (Director, Southwark Social Services). Since the focus of the HAZ is on children, Southwark Community Care Forum nominated myself as the Children and Families Policy Officer to fill the Southwark voluntary sector place on the Board. I have given regular feedback to the 230 voluntary organisations working with children through Children in Southwark newsletter and mailings, as well as through Alliance and SCCF meetings.

In the early stages of HAZ I raised a number of voluntary sector concerns around funding processes and communications. In my view, the situation has improved significantly with the recruitment of a HAZ Team based at the Health Authority who have developed more transparent funding procedures and a regular newsletter.

The Partnership Board has agreed that the focus of the LSL HAZ will remain on children and young people for at least the first three years of the programme. Beyond this the programme may be 'rolled out' to other groups. Southwark Children and Families Alliance/SCCF will continue to argue that children should remain the priority until HAZ has achieved its targets and demonstrated a significant improvement in children's health and opportunities in South London. If we cannot get it right for children first, what hope is there for the rest of the community?

The Challenge of Partnership Working

Partnership working potentially offers the voluntary sector more of a say in determining priorities and in decisions about the allocation of resources. At the same time, being 'on the inside' confers a responsibility on us to work for the common goals of the Partnership.

Myself and other SCCF officers have contributed to the work of the Health Action Zone in various ways including:

- regularly attending meetings of the HAZ Partnership Board, Healthier Communities Programme Group and Listening to Young People & Community Development Workstream;
- proposing voluntary sector members on the Programme Groups;
- drafting an invitation to tender for a review of children's participation, and subsequently commissioning this review from Barnardo's;
- drafting a tender on advice services;
- helping write job descriptions for HAZ community development workers;
- taking part in the tendering process for the HAZ Community Chest;
- keeping voluntary organisations informed about the HAZ, including a Meet the Funders Seminar on the HAZ Community Chest.

On almost any health, social, or educational indicator, the system has failed many local children in the past. Southwark Children and Families Alliance/SCCF will continue to engage constructively (and where necessary critically) with the LSL Health Action Zone because we share the commitment of our other partners to change this.

If there are any issues you would like to discuss about how the voluntary sector relates to the LSL Health Action Zone, please contact me: Neil Orr, 0171 252 5859.

£ Funding news £

Comic Relief

22 local voluntary organisations attended a Southwark Community Care Forum 'Meet the Funders' seminar on 2nd November with Peter Argill from Comic Relief. Comic Relief have a Small Grants Programme (grants of up to £3000) and a Large Grants Programme (up to £25,000 a year for up to three years). Within the UK, Comic Relief have five programmes: Young People; Disabled People; Older People; Domestic Violence; and Refugees. The Young People's Grants Programme supports work with people aged 14-25, with four priorities:

- young people abused through prostitution (including outreach, advice, support, refuges and campaigning work);
- young people involved with the criminal justice system (including advice and support to young people in prison and on release);
- young people affected by drugs and alcohol (including outreach, arrest referral schemes, residential care and work around HIV and hepatitis C);
- work which is run by young people themselves (including actively managing projects and expressing their views to decision makers).

There is a two stage application process. Voluntary organisations are asked to fill in a Summary Form, and then, if shortlisted a Full Application Form. The next deadlines for Summary Forms are 13 January 2000, 2 May 2000 and 10 August 2000. For an information pack contact Comic Relief, 74 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1EF (tel. 0171 436 1122, fax. 0171 436 1541, e-mail red@comicrelief.org.uk).

National Lottery Charities Board

The NLCB is now allowing charities to apply for more than one grant, as long as the grants are for different purposes. Indications are that this is because NLCB are keen to stimulate more applications. At present, around 50% of applications are successful, a very high rate of success compared with other funders. However, the NLCB will have £1m less to spend next year, so it may be an advantage to get your application in during this financial year. Application packs are available from NLCB London Regional Office, tel. 0171 291 8500, or check the website: www.nlcb.org.uk

Roald Dahl Foundation

A key priority for the Roald Dahl Foundation is literacy. Grants of between £1000 and £25,000 are available for:

- After school clubs for children and their families who would like to improve literacy skills;
- Centres which offer or wish to initiate literacy programmes for young people(16-25);
- Computer/technological assistance with reading for the partially sighted, blind or head injured.

Applications forms are available from Road Dahl Foundation, 92 High Street, Great Missenden, Buck HP16 0AN (01494 890465).

News

New Children's Hospital

A new £50 million children's hospital for south London is to be built at St Thomas'. As well as clinical facilities, the hospital will include a children's school and parent and family accommodation. Consultation is underway on 5 designs shortlisted from a design competition, with a decision on which to proceed with due in December.

Details from Guy's & St Thomas' Children's Services Directorate, 0171 955 5000, ext. 2078.

Voluntary Sector Capacity Building

SAVO are providing free training for voluntary sector staff and management committee members, covering topics including staff development, organisational development, management committees, and the single regeneration budget. Details from Herman Irish (0171 703 8733).

Health First Training

Health First provide free health promotion training for voluntary and statutory workers in LSL. The new training brochure lists a range of courses from January to June 2000, including breastfeeding awareness, accident prevention and smoking. For a copy of the brochure call 0207 955 4366.

Early Years and Childcare News

Network Meetings

Southwark Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership is holding a number of Network Meetings for all local childcare providers to highlight and discuss crucial issues. The main focus of the first meetings will be on the new Childcare Information Service (CIS). Jane Dobinson from the Cambridge-based Childcare Information Systems Development Project will be giving a demonstration of the Childcare Information Service and the benefits to childcare providers. The Southwark CIS phoneline will be launched in December 1999 enabling parents to access up to date information on what childcare is available in their area.

Two Network Meetings are scheduled for 24th November 1999:

- 1:00 - 3:00 pm, Surrey Docks Watersports Centre, Rope Street, SE16;
- 7.00 - 9.00 pm, Club Room, Dulwich Leisure Centre, 45 East Dulwich Road, SE22 9AN.

To book a place please contact Margot Lawrence, 0171 564 4294 or Beverley Williams, 0171 525 5260.

Holiday Playschemes Funding

Southwark Children and Families Alliance is working with Southwark Council to submit a consortium bid to the New Opportunities Fund in December to fund holiday playschemes in 2000. We want to encourage as many voluntary and community groups as we can to take part. We will do the work writing the application - you will get the funding. Support will also be available for organisations who have not run a playscheme before. To register an interest contact Dave Wallis (0171 525 1504) or Neil Orr (0171 252 5859) as soon as possible.

Sure Start Open Day

Sure Start Southwark Aylesbury Plus, the new programme aiming to improve the health and well-being of young children (0-4) on the Aylesbury Estate and surrounding area, is due to start in the next month. An open day is being held to discuss with parents what services will be available, with fun and games for children.

The Open Day will take place on Saturday 27 November 1999, 10.00 am - 2.00 pm at Michael Faraday School, Portland Street, SE17.

Children & Families Alliance Meeting

10:00 am – 12:30 pm,
Tuesday 23rd November 1999

Walworth Rd. Methodist Church,
54 Camberwell Rd, SE5

Agenda

Children's Social Services in Southwark: Quality Protects
- with Andrew Downing, Southwark Social Services, plus short contributions from voluntary organisations on children with disabilities, young carers and other children in need.

Round up of Current Initiatives
- including Early Years and Childcare Development Plan, Sure Start, Health Action Zone and Children's Partnership Board.

Child Protection Update
- including recommendations from the review of a recent child death in Southwark.

Funding Update
- latest news on funding opportunities for children's organisations.

Organisations attending the meeting can collect copies of the Southwark Early Years and Childcare Development Plan and Southwark Area Child Protection Committee's new booklet for parents.

Children in Southwark

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Children & Families Policy Officer: Neil Orr

Bringing together voluntary organisations to promote the rights and interests of children in Southwark

NATIONAL LOTTERY CHARITIES BOARD

Children in Southwark

Newsletter of Southwark Children and Families Alliance/SCCF No.14 - December 1999

Children and young people affected by HIV

The theme of this year's World AIDS Day on 1 December was Listen, Learn, Live, with a particular focus on children and young people.

Children can be infected with HIV in a number of ways. Earlier on in the epidemic many children, particularly haemophiliac boys, acquired HIV through infected blood products. Treatment of blood supplies has eliminated this as a route of infection within the UK. Today most HIV infections in children in this country are due to mother to child transmission during pregnancy, birth or breast feeding. Clinical treatment can now almost eliminate the risk of transmission from mother to child, but many mothers are unaware that they are HIV-infected. For this reason there is an increasing emphasis on antenatal HIV testing.

Older children and young people can become infected by HIV as a result of injecting drug use (sharing needles) and unprotected sexual intercourse.

The majority of HIV infected children live in London, many of them living in African families. Many other children who are not themselves HIV-infected are affected by the impact of a parent or sibling's illness. Last year Southwark Social Services supported about 70 families affected by HIV.

Voluntary organisations have been at the forefront of developing HIV services, but many of them face an uncertain future. The spiralling costs of HIV treatment have put pressure on health budgets to the detriment of non-clinical services, and across London voluntary organisations are merging, refocusing or, in some cases, facing possible closure.

In this issue of 'Children in Southwark' we want to highlight the work of three voluntary organisations working with children and young people locally.

Taifa Community Care Project

Taifa Community Care Project was set up in November 1993 to provide practical care and support to African children and families affected by HIV. These services include shopping, domestic help, personal care, taking children to and from school, and many others provided by trained volunteers recruited from the diverse African communities to meet the cultural and linguistic needs of children and families.

Taifa also undertakes health promotion amongst African communities; for instance it has distributed more than 6000 condoms/femidoms at African social venues across London.

For further information contact George Oryang, Taifa Community Care Project, 5-6 Sceaux Gardens, Dalwood Street, SE5 7DN (tel. 0171 708 1781).

PPC (Positive Partners, Positively Children) was established in 1987. It provides support to children and families affected by HIV across Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham.

The majority of people who use PPC services are from the African communities, many of them asylum seekers. 90% of families they support have only one parent and are often coping with poor housing and financial hardship as well as living with HIV. Services include:

- Home-based childcare: paid, trained and qualified carers look after children in the family home, offering parents a break as well as practical and emotional support, and children a chance to take part in ordinary 'kids things' they may otherwise miss out on.
- Clubs for children aged 4 to 8, 8 to 12, and 10 - 16 years, with activities including arts, crafts, sports, homework support and computer training.
- The Young People who Know Project - a group, facilitated by a child psychologist, for young people coping with emotional and social issues arising from knowing about a parent's diagnosis of HIV infection (many children do not know about their parent's HIV status).

Further information: PPC, Unit F7, Shakespeare Business Centre, 245a Coldharbour Lane, SW9 8RR (0171 738 7333).

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Future Perfect @ Healthy Gay Living Centre

Gareth Davies, Senior Youth Work Coordinator at HGLC writes about this new project:

Each year the number of young gay and bisexual men who become infected with HIV increases. Since 1990, 200 gay men in their teens and 1600 gay men under 25 have been infected with HIV. For most of these young adults infection occurred at a time when the facts about HIV transmission and prevention were known.

Young people learn about life from a combination of home, peers and school. In most of these instances there is little outlet for a young gay man to gain knowledge or receive positive affirmation about his own identity. A situation compounded by Section 28, the unequal age of consent and the homophobia within our schools. For most young gay men sexual risks can be taken without having a full understanding or knowledge of the facts involved in preventing HIV infection.

Young gay and bisexual men have few opportunities to express their needs, fears and anxieties about their sexuality in an environment where their sexual identity is not considered a problem or a phase. Support organisations working with young people make a common assumption that all service users are heterosexual, leaving a young gay or bisexual person feeling that their very sense of identity and esteem is of no value.

From the middle of January, Future Perfect, the youth project within HGLC, will start a programme of education, targeting gay and bisexual men 25 and under. The courses and workshops focus on reducing the risk of HIV infection amongst young gay and bisexual men.

The courses and workshops will vary in time, topic and depth of involvement. Issues covered will range from basic information on HIV prevention to managing relationships, independent living skills through to coping with the gay scene in London.

The aim of the Future Perfect Project is to support young gay and bisexual men in developing knowledge, skills and abilities to maintain an HIV negative status. To give them an opportunity to develop their confidence and enable them to put these skills into practice. For more information please call Gareth Davies at the Healthy Gay Living Centre, 40 Borough High Street, SE1 1XW (0207 407 3550).

Other local HIV contacts:

- Southwark Social Services Children with Disabilities Team (HIV/AIDS work is integrated in this team): 0207 525 4479.
- Confidential HIV testing: Kings College Hospital Caldecot Centre: 0207 346 3453; Guys Hospital Lloyd Clinic: 0207 955 4511.

Social Services Performance

Southwark children's services have performed relatively well in the new social services 'performance tables'. The data collected by the Department of Health for the Personal Social Services Performance Assessment Framework aims to compare the quality of services in different local authorities by measuring a number of performance indicators.

The performance indicators for children mainly relate to children looked after by the local authority ('in care') or on the child protection register, rather than other children in need (such as disabled children) so the picture they provide is inevitably incomplete.

Southwark Social Services performed particularly well in relation to the Government's aim to provide stability for children looked after. 7% of children looked after experienced 3 or more placements in a year, the lowest percentage in inner London (the highest was Lewisham with 19%). 81% of children looked after were in family placements, the highest in inner London.

The statistics and related data can be found on the Internet at: www.doh.gov.uk/public/stats3.htm

Primary Schools Performance

There were mixed results for Southwark in the national performance tables for primary schools, published on the 8 December. The tables measure the percentage of pupils at key stage 2 who reach target level 4 in English, maths and science. The average figures for Southwark in 1999 were 57.7%, 57.4% and 67.1% respectively, compared with an average for England of 69.7%, 68.2% and 77.9%. The government has set targets of a national pass rate of 80% in English and 75% in maths by 2002.

Although overall the Southwark results were the sixth worst in England, this disguises large variations between schools. For instance, the figures in maths ranged from 13% to 94%. Overall 52 Southwark primary schools improved between 1996 and 1999, while performance has declined in 11. Friars Primary School in Bermondsey was the seventh most improved school in the country. Full details on the DfEE Website: www.dfee.gov.uk-perform.htm

Meanwhile a Times Educational Supplement analysis of GCSE results adjusted for poverty puts Southwark in the top 25% of local education authorities, performing better than might be expected for an authority with such high levels of deprivation (3 December 1999 -see www.tes.co.uk).

Free Training

Southwark Children and Families Alliance/Southwark Community Care Forum have arranged three one day courses specifically for voluntary organisations working with children locally:

- **Childhood Ailments and First Aid**, Monday 31 January 2000 (trainers: First Aid Supply and Training Co.). This course will cover basic aspects of dealing with emergencies as well as recognising and responding to some of the more common childhood ailments;

- **Children's Participation in Voluntary Organisations**, 24 February 2000 (trainers: Bharti Mepani and Maddy Lewis, Save the Children). This course aims to enable participants to increase their understanding of children's participation, enabling them to plan towards involving children in their organisations;

- **Introduction to the Children Act**, 31 March 2000 (trainer: Caroline Rushforth). The key principles of the Children Act and how they are currently applied in work with children and families.

All courses are free. To book places please return the form enclosed with this mailing. If you have not receive a training brochure contact SCCF Training on 0171 252 5291.

In addition to the above courses, Southwark Community Care Forum and Southwark Social Services have jointly commissioned mental health training, following a successful bid to the Department of Health. Voluntary and statutory agencies working with children and families will be particularly interested in the following one day course:

- **Parenting and Mental Ill Health**, 10 February 2000 **or** Tuesday 14 February 2000 (trainer Jessica McKoen, The Learning Agency). This interagency workshop will look at the latest research on parental mental ill health and the effects of this on child development and family dynamics. It will look at the symptoms, diagnosis and treatments of the major mental disorders in adults and at an in-depth case study of mental ill health within the family setting. Other areas covered will include assessment of parenting, perspectives of family members and carers, and the roles and responsibilities of different agencies.

For an application form call Jane or Ruth in Social Services Training on 0171 525 3815.

Early Years and Childcare News

'Hard to reach' research

The Daycare Trust have completed research into the childcare needs of 'hard to reach' groups in Southwark, especially those whose home language is not English. The study was commissioned by Southwark Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) in order to assess unmet needs for childcare.

For the purposes of the study, 28 community groups working with nearly 6000 parents were contacted and discussion groups held with 58 parents. Key findings included:

- 45% of parents interviewed spoke little or no English, and a number were not literate in their own language;
- 60% of parents interviewed were lone parents;
- 79% of parents indicated that they needed more accessible information on childcare;
- 65% of parents indicated that they would like to attend classes, study or train;
- 80% of parents with 3 and 4 year old children wanted a nursery place, but only 17% had one;
- 76% of parents wanted some form of out of school hours provision;
- 60% of parents cited language and cultural barriers to using childcare.

A key recommendation is to initiate new childcare developments with, not for, hard to reach communities. Implementing this will be part of the role of Southwark's new childcare development manager, Emmanuella Ilomuanya (tel. 0171 739 2866), employed by the Daycare Trust with funding from the EYDCP. From January Emmanuella will be based at Blackfriars Settlement.

Funding

Healthy Communities Fund

Applications are now being invited for Small Grants from the LSL Health Action Zone Healthy Communities Fund. Grants from £1000 to £5000 are available for community groups and voluntary organisations with an income of less than £30,000 a year. All Grants must: help improve the well-being and health of children and/or young people aged up to 25; benefit people and communities facing disadvantage, isolation or discrimination; and have the support of the people and community they aim to benefit.

Application forms are available from: Healthy Communities Fund, SELCF, Room 6, Winchester Houses, 11 Cranmer Road, SW9 6EJ (0207 582 5117).

November Alliance Meeting

Andrew Downing from Southwark Social Services attended the November meeting of Southwark Children and Families Alliance to talk about Quality Protects (QP). Last year, Social Services received a QP Special Grant from the Department of Health of £1.2 million. This has been used to commission a range of service developments including increased respite provision for children with disabilities and their families, post-adoption support for children and families and education and health teams to improve the life chances of children looked after by the local authority. Some of these projects have been commissioned from the voluntary sector.

As the lead officer for QP, Andrew is drafting the Quality Protects Management Action Plan for 2000/2001, on the basis of which funding will be allocated. While this year's plan has had a major focus on children looked after by the local authority ('in care'), next year's plan will have more of a focus on children in need being supported by social services, including children with disabilities. At the meeting, local voluntary organisations raised a number of concerns about current services which could be addressed in the QP Plan:

- respite care provision for children with disabilities and their families is still inadequate; in particular children with medical needs are insufficiently catered for by current services;
- services for children with HIV are under threat as health funding is switched to cover treatment costs;
- there have been problems with young carers of adults with disabilities getting to school; there is a need to improve links between children's and adults' social services.

The QP Management Action Plan has to be submitted to the Department of Health by the end of January 2000. If there are any further service issues you think should be addressed please contact Neil Orr at SCFA as soon as possible.

NCVCCO Conference

The annual conference of the National Council for Voluntary Child Care Organisations last month provided an opportunity to reflect on what the voluntary sector is trying to achieve for children. NCVCCO members include most of the major national children's charities, such as Barnardo's, NSPCC and NCH Action for Children, as well as some more local organisations such as Southwark Children and Families Alliance.

The present government is implementing some of what the children's voluntary sector has been arguing for years, such as expanding childcare. In the past two years, the voluntary sector has spent most of its time engaging with the many new government initiatives on children, nowhere more so than in Southwark. However a key theme of the conference was that if the voluntary sector is to maintain its independent, cutting-edge role it has to do more than implement national and local government agendas. These agendas are still not childhood-centred, even if children are a key focus.

The voluntary sector needs to develop a long term vision of how society needs to change to benefit children. This involves thinking what may be politically unthinkable at present such as radically changing patterns of work, education and leisure to enable children to enjoy a quality childhood. A discussion of some of these issues will take place at the next Alliance meeting.

Children & Families Alliance Meeting

2.00 -4.30 pm,
Thurs. 27th January 2000,
Scott Hall, Cambridge House
131 Camberwell Rd, SE5

The Children's Voluntary Sector in the 21st Century - where do we go from here?

Round up of Current Initiatives: including Early Years and Childcare Development Partnership, Sure Start, Health Action Zone and Children's Partnership Board.

Funding Update: latest news on funding opportunities for children's organisations.

Children in Southwark

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